

A CIVIL WAR READER  
LETTERS, REMINISCENCES, AND ROSTERS

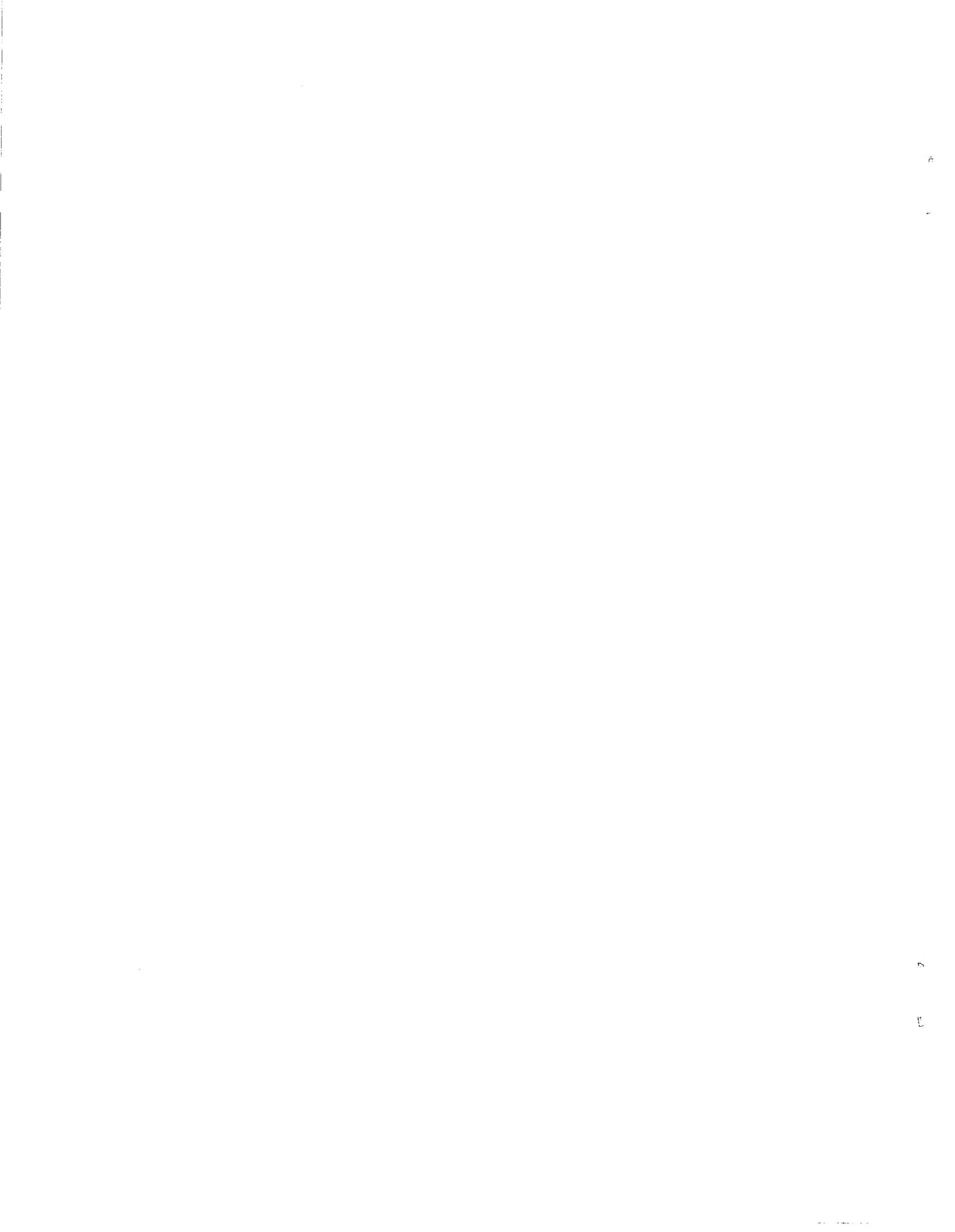
JOURNAL  
WASHINGTON COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY  
P.O. BOX 567  
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EPITAPH  
CONFEDERATE MONUMENT, EDENTON, N.C.  
“Gashed with Honorable Scars  
Low in Glory’s Lap they Lie.  
Though they fell, they fell like Stars,  
Streaming Splendor through the Sky.”

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WASHINGTON COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

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The READER that you now hold is peopled almost entirely by men and women of Washington and Tyrrell. They are persons who were of us, and of whom we are.

This is an eclectic collection of sketches of soldiers, of rosters and letters, of church records and old stories. With the letters and personal statements we have worked from the original, or photocopy of the original, when available. The grammar, punctuation, and capitalization have been faithfully reproduced, for that helps us to better know the writer.

Individual articles are followed by the initials of the contributor. Please refer to the listing below for full identification.

## CONTRIBUTORS

Peggy B. Adams	PBA
Ronnie Comstock	RC
Atwood B. Davenport	ABD
Virginia Haire	VH
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Edited by Edwin A. Norman  
Typed by Debra R. Coker

**From the Roanoke Beacon**  
**April 17, 1914**  
**WASHINGTON COUNTY'S LIVING AND DEAD HEROES**  
**OF THE LOST CAUSE**

Editor Beacon,

Below you will find a roster of the Confederate soldiers now living in Washington County, and following the roster you will find a "Roll of the Dead" who left us during 1913 to join the great majority of their comrades above.

The "Gray Line" will soon disappear and when it does the noblest of God's creation will have passed away.

Yours truly,  
W.F. Beasley

<u>Plymouth Township</u>	<u>Lees Mill Township</u>	<u>Scuppernong Township</u>	<u>Skinner'sville Township</u>
Levi Blount	Jeff Cahoon	Dempsy Spruill	John Stillman
D.G. Darden	Rhoderick Campbell	I.I. Bateman	Willliam Gray
Asa Dixon	H. Chesson	David B. Ambrose	
Daniel Garrett	J.W. Mizelle	H.Z. Tarkenton	
Ira Hardison	N.B. Mizelle	W.H. Hardison	
N.H. Harrison	Wm. Sennett		
J.A. Spruill	O.B. Craddock		
John Stocks			
W.C. Weede			
W.F. Beasley			

<u>Died During 1913</u>
H.H. Bateman
Joseph Brinley
W.R. Chesson
Arthur Collins
L.B. Comstock
B.S. Hassell
Elijah Jones
E.P. Overton

William F. Beasley, writer of the above, had served as Lieutenant Colonel in the 71st N.C. Regiment (Second Junior Reserves). He led Tyrrell County's successful effort to secure the Confederate monument that now stands on the Court House grounds in Columbia.

The Colonel's letter and roster is followed by a lengthy BEACON editorial, a portion of which is extracted below.

"Shame on you, Washington County! Can you, will you, continue to allow the memory of these noble men gradually to die? It is no more than right that a finger of

scorn and a smile of sarcastic contempt should be pointed at you by your sister counties. Have you no love for the men that died and others that offered their lives as a sacrifice to protect your prestige? A monument should be, just as early as possible, be erected on the Court House green to commerate the deeds of these men. The question is "where shall we obtain the funds?" Get it by public subscription. There is not, there cannot be, an individual within the borders of our county but what would be glad to donate to such a worthy cause. These men, besides giving all their earthly possessions, even offered their lives to protect this generation. Any man that would refuse to give anything toward this should be shunned by all humanity and sunk into complete oblivion as far as honor and obligation is concerned."

LFS



#### FLAG OF THE 17TH

In 1901, Wilson G. Lamb, who served as Second Lieutenant of Company F., 17th Regiment, wrote an account of that regiment's service. The account was published in North Carolina Regiments, Vol. II, and includes the following: "The flag of the Seventeenth Regiment North Carolina Troops, saved at the surrender by Private Abel Thomas, of Company A., was unfurled at the unveiling of the Confederate monument at Raleigh on 20 May, 1895, and beneath its tattered and bullet-ridden folds the veteran survivors marched to do honor to their dead heroic comrades."

EAN



#### THE COMSTOCK BROTHERS 17th N.C. Regiment

My great great grandfather, Job Comstock, served in Company H early in the war. He was captured at Ft. Hatteras, and was held prisoner at New York and Boston for several months until exchanged.

Job's brother was Louis B. Comstock, who served in Co. G. of the 17th. He enlisted in May, 1862. He was wounded in his hand and thigh near Cold Harbor in July, 1864. The wounds must have been serious, because we can't find records of further service.

RC

(N.C. TROOPS, NC A&H)

## COMPANY G., 17TH N.C. REGIMENT

Co. G. comprised chiefly of Washington County men, probably never mustered more than 70 "effectives" at any one time. 150 men appear on its rosters between that gala day in May 1862 when the 17th Regiment (2nd Organization) was formed at Camp Mangum, Raleigh, and the last known muster roll of October 1864.

A careful study of the muster rolls indicates that the Company fielded no more than 70 men for its part in the pre-dawn raid on Plymouth on December 10, 1862.

Over the years, the Company had 17 desertions. Eleven men were discharged for complaints ranging from lung problems to rheumatism to hemorrhoids. A few others were transferred to other units.

We will probably address the deserters in a future Journal. But today, our subject is the Deaths in Company G.

### MEN OF CO. G., 17th REGIMENT KNOWN TO HAVE DIED OF COMBAT WOUNDS

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Place of Death</u>	<u>Date of Death</u>
Ainsley, Benjamin B.	Pvt	Wilmington, NC	9 January 1865
Davenport, Hardy W.	Pvt	Petersburg, VA	30 July 1864
Davenport, Henry M.	Pvt	Richmond, VA	16 January 1864
Howell, Brisco B.	Pvt	Bermuda Hundred, VA	19 May 1864
Latham, William A.	Sgt	Goldsboro, NC	1 February 1865
Manning, John W.	Cpl	Washington, NC	6 September 1862
Mayo, Ruben	Pvt	Wilmington, NC	2 January 1865
Norman, Andrew	1st Sgt	Petersburg, VA	9 August 1864
Norman, John W.*	Pvt	New Bern, NC	_____ 1863
Norman, Joseph S.	Pvt	Petersburg, VA	25 May 1864
Oliver, Henry H.	Pvt	Bermuda Hundred, VA	20 May 1864
Tarkinton, Lawrence S.	Pvt	Petersburg, VA	13 June 1864
Tarkinton, Edward	Pvt	Washington, NC	6 September 1862

\* Wounded and captured at Washington. Died prisoner of war.

The cause of death of two of Company G's known dead is not given in their military records. Both died in a Confederate hospital.

Wise, William S.	Pvt	Richmond, VA	29 November 1864
Woodley, Joseph	Pvt	Richmond, VA	9 December 1864

Source of all death information (Co. G.) in this article is:  
*N.C. Troops, Vol. VI: North Carolina Archives & History*

**MEN OF CO. G., 17th REGIMENT**  
**KNOWN TO HAVE DIED OF NON-COMBAT CAUSES**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Place of Death</u>	<u>Cause</u>	<u>Date of Death</u>
Anderson, Robert	Pvt	Place not reported	Disease	2 August 1863
Barnes, Hezekiah H.	Pvt	Richmond, VA	Disease	19 November 1864
Barnhill, J.H.	Pvt	At Home	Small Pox	23 February 1863
Blount, John G.*	Sgt	Camp Chase, MD	Chronic diarrhoea	11 May 1865
Corprew, James M.	Pvt	Wilmington, NC	Pneumonia	17 January 1865
Corprew, Malachi	Pvt	Kinston, NC	Shot self ("Accident")	4 May 1863
Corprew, Septimus*	Pvt	Ft. Monroe, VA	Axphisia	31 December 1864
Craddock, Thomas J.**	Pvt	New Bern, NC	Phthisis pulmonalis	15 August 1863
Davenport, Henry J.J.	Pvt	Wilmington, NC	Pneumonia	10 January 1865
Foley, John W.	Pvt	Goldsboro, NC	Pneumonia	20 January 1865
Freeman, John A.	Pvt	Greenville, NC	Fever	3 September 1863
Gurkin, Alfred D.	Pvt	Camp Mangum	Disease	21 May 1862
Harris, Little B.	Pvt	Richmond, VA	Chronic diarrhoea	6 January 1865
Harrison, Asa W.	Pvt	Greenville, NC	Fever	26 August 1863
Hopkins, James F.	Pvt	Raleigh, NC	Typhoid fever	19 August 1862
Hyman, William L.	Pvt	Place not reported	Disease	30 November 1864
Lucas, James Harvey	Pvt	Hamilton, NC	Fever	30 June 1863
Spruill, Joseph T.	Pvt	Richmond, VA	Compressio cerebri	21 June 1864
Steely, William A.	Pvt	Camp Campbell, VA	Typhoid	7 August 1862
Swain, Franklin S.	Pvt	Goldsboro, NC	Disease	28 June 1862
Swain, James N.	Pvt	Halifax(?), NC	Disease	Date not reported
Swain, Henry R.	Pvt	Wilmington, NC	Bowels	18 January 1864
Windley, William W.	2d Lt	Hamilton, NC	Disease	2 August 1863

\* Prisoner of war at death.

\*\* Had deserted Co. G. 29 July, 1862.

We note that only three of the Company G. deaths are attributed to pneumonia, and that they all occurred within a 10-day period—January 10-January 20, 1865. Why this sudden rash of pneumonia deaths? The answer may be simple.

When the Confederate government learned that the Butler expedition had sailed to attack Fort Fisher, it hastened to send troops to the relief of that vital position. Kirkland's brigade was immediately dispatched from the Petersburg-Richmond front, and constituted the vanguard of the relief troops.

Brigadier General W.W. Kirkland reported: "I reached Wilmington about midnight of the 23d (December 1864) with the 17th and 42d and 100 men of the 66th North Carolina Regiments, of my brigade....." Two poignant commentaries on the frigid trip south may shed light of the pneumonia deaths in Company G.

A historian for the 42nd regiment, with which the 17th shared the long train ride, reported: "The men were packed in box cars with the thermometer at zero. They kept from freezing by

building fires in the center of the cars and closing the doors, compelled to endure the smoke in order to keep warm."

The bulk of the 66th Regiment followed the vanguard about a day later. One of that contingent reported: "We were placed on and in box cars and flat cars, and the train made its way slowly.....amid snow, sleet, and rain, the severest bitter cold we had ever experienced."

In the terrible exposure of the trip, do we have the cause of our deaths from pneumonia?

EAN

*(NORTH CAROLINA REGIMENTS, VOL. II & III)  
(OFFICIAL RECORDS, SERIES I, VOL 42)*



### A LETTER FROM PRISON

Point Lookout, Md.  
May 27, 1864  
Co. F 3rd. Division

Mrs. Polk:

When first you open this you will be at fault to know who the writer is, but I hope when your eye meets the signature you will not think of me in this addressing you and that the name may seem somewhat familiar to you. Of course, it is necessary to explain the object of this letter. I was taken minus my baggage and of course I am very much in need of everything and would be very thankful for anything that you would send me in the shape of clothes or money. On the latter I have not a cent. I wear No. 6 Boots, No. 7 Hat, Pants 33 inches long. Coat size 2 1/2, underclothes. I need very much and especially a hat. My stepmother, your daughter is well. If you will send me the above things or some money, I shall be thankful and amply repay you after the war.

I am Respectfully Edgar Latham, a Son of Charles Latham, Plymouth N.C.

Direct to Edgar Latham  
Co. F- 3rd Division  
Prisoners Camp  
Point Lookout, Maryland

Care of Major Weymouth, Provost Marshall

**PBA** (Great-grand niece of Edgar Latham)

*(Letter donated by Mrs. Emily Nelson, granddaughter of Charles and Emma Polk Latham, to Port of Plymouth Museum and the Washington County Historical Society)*

**THE BROTHERS CHESSON**  
**RICHARD B. AND HEZEKIAH, PVTS.**  
**Co. B., 1st Regiment N.C. Cavalry**  
**&**  
**EDWARD F., CPL., AND THOMAS W., PVT.**  
**Co. G., 17th N.C. Regiment**

These brothers were sons of Hezekiah and Martha Smith Chesson of Lees Mill District, Washington County. It seems nothing short of miraculous that four of the same family could serve throughout the war without any one of them being mortally wounded or suffering serious illness. Richard was my great grandfather, so I'll tell about him first.

Richard Buncombe Chesson, called "Dicky", age 33, enlisted in the cavalry in August 1861, and is reported on his company's last muster roll (December 1864). "Dicky" died in 1903. His wife, Mary Frances Woodley, whom he had married about 1853, passed away in 1906.

Hezekiah Chesson, the "baby" of the family, was 18 when he enlisted on the same day as his brother Richard. Captured while on outpost duty in February 1862, he was exchanged and returned to his company. He was present and accounted for on the last known muster roll of the company.

Edward Chesson enlisted in Co. H. 17th Regiment (1st Organization) in May 1861. He was captured, with most of the regiment, at Ft. Hatteras, in August. Confined at Ft. Columbia, New York Harbor, and later at Ft. Warren, Boston, he was exchanged in February, 1862. As the 17th was reorganizing, in March 1862, Uncle Edward reenlisted, this time in Co. G., and was soon promoted to corporal. He was wounded at Petersburg on September 15, 1864, and in October was furloughed for sixty days. In December, he was captured near Plymouth, while, apparently still on furlough. He was confined at Point Lookout, Md., where he was when the war ended.

Thomas Chesson experienced the same captivity as his brother, Edward. Following his exchange he, unlike Edward, apparently "took a break" from the army before re-enlisting in December 1863. He was wounded in the Petersburg area the following July. We know little of his military record after that.

**ABD**

*(N.C. TROOPS, VOLS II & VI)*  
*(Chesson Family Research by Eugene Chesson)*



My Chesson relatives said that the boys would sometimes slip home on leave from the Confederate army. Lee's Mill was usually behind the Union lines, and they had to keep sharp watch. When Blue Coats were spotted in the neighborhood, the boys would quickly hide their uniforms and "run hide" in the swamp.

**ABD**

**LETTER TO A DEAD MAN**  
**WILSON A. NORMAN TO JOSIAH COLLINS III**

When Wilson Norman enlisted in March 1862, he was a farmer whose land lay on Indian Swamp abutting the Tyrrell County line. He left at home his wife, three daughters, a son, and probably no fewer than 11 slaves (Census 1860). We aren't sure if his mother, 79 years old and of his household in 1860, was still alive.

At enlistment, he was 37 years old and stood 5'8" tall. Mustered in as 3rd corporal, he was 5th sergeant when he wrote to Mr. Collins, and would be 3rd sergeant on the last-known muster rolls (September-October 1864) of the 17th Regiment. Of the other Normans of Company G., Wilson was uncle to Pvt. John W. and 1st Sgt. Andrew, and 2nd cousin once-removed to Capt. Thomas J. and Pvt. Joseph S. After the war, Wilson resumed farming and was appointed a Justice of the Peace. He served as a commissioner in the division of the 1150 acre farm of the father of Captain Thomas J. Norman. The Captain would "return the favor" after Wilson's death in 1868 by being one of those chosen to allot the widow's dower.

Josiah Collins III needs no introduction. Owner of the splendid "Somerset" on Lake Phelps he, with 328 slaves (Census 1860) and vast fertile fields, was one of the wealthiest and most prominent men of the state. Collins became a refugee early in the war, leaving such men as Reverend George Patterson (later a Confederate chaplain) and an overseer to do what they could to protect his property.

Mr. Collins died in Hillsborough on June 17, 1863. The news of his death had not reached Ft. Branch by June 28, the date of Norman's letter.

Wilson's letter is written in a confident, legible hand, showing no intimidation by the fact that Collins was a product of Harvard and other schools of the North. Wilson's schooling probably was of sporadic attendance of local private schools and family tutoring, as he was already in his late teens when the first effective Public School Law was enacted. His letter is quoted here, in its entirety, because in its less than 700 words are many persons and places that are NOTEworthy. His spelling, punctuation, and grammar are accurately reproduced.

June 28th 1863

Fort Branch near Hamilton NC  
Camp of the 17th Regt NCT

Mr. Collins Dear Sir

I avail my self of this opportunity for the first time to write to you a few lines let you know that I am in the land of the living & am enjoying my self as well as a soldier can. I have noe nuse of much importence to communicate to you Mrs Norman<sup>1</sup> has bin up to see me She got hear last Saturday was a fortnight ago and staid in the Country till next Wednesday when she started home and she Reached home safe the next evening without the yanke troubellin of hir at the yankey Pickets ha(l)ted hir when she was agoing home near the old Maraticlock<sup>2</sup> Church Asked hir if she wanted to go to town She told them no- they asked her if she wanted to go to Lees Mills she told them yes they told hir to go on. they never serched the Rockaway to what she had nor nothing at all When she com up she never seed no pickets at all She told me

the people was all well the yanks has not bin in the house to truble hir at all they have taken nothing from the place only 2 horses 2 mules & two carts She said that Maj. Bartholomew<sup>3</sup> went in the poarch one day to enquire the way to your place and he said he was agoing to set your negroes free which he did & gave them as much land as they wanted to tend & gave them alot hogs the yanks gave old S.P. Woodley<sup>4</sup> and old white horse that they tuck from your place your negroes has bought the old horse back they have bought old Levi Phelps<sup>5</sup> old horse your Bill Peney<sup>6</sup> shoad everything that you had hid and the yankees has taken all of your property that cold be moved and cared it away Old Bill said if old Joe Collins ever comback there he would take his wife and children and go to the north for he would never live with you again. George Spruill<sup>7</sup> is still living at your place yet I think that is all about your place as Mr. C.L. Pettigrews<sup>8</sup> place she said she did not hear any thing about it Gen Martin<sup>9</sup> had Ben B Ainsley<sup>10</sup> & John W. Norman<sup>11</sup> detail to gow down in Washington County in May for sompurpose I no not & the Buffalows caught them & cared them to Plymouth I heard yesterday tht they had Perol Norman & cared Ainsley to Newbern & they intended to hang him for James Phelps<sup>12</sup> swore that he Ainsly went to his house & Broke open his trunk and stole his money that is aly for Ainsly has not bin to his house at all John W. Norman is son of Joab Norman<sup>13</sup> that is all about them that has com to me

the officers & men in this Regt are in fine spirits we has a good of hard duty to do we have three companeys are on Picket at a time we have to keep Picket down as low as Jamesville 2 companeys are down there know--of Maj Sharp<sup>14</sup> last Friday night Sharp sent one of the Lieut with squad of men down within 2 miles of Plymouth they went down in the woods in front of Capt Hamptons<sup>15</sup> & caught one Lieut & 2 privates & 2 horses and brought them away safe Conl Martin<sup>16</sup> sent them of to Richmond yesterday morning Capt Norman<sup>17</sup> sends his respects to you H Davenport<sup>18</sup> is well and all the rest of the boys that George<sup>19</sup> brought out old man Moses Davenports<sup>20</sup> wife has died since Christmas & old man Moses has got married again he was married the 4 day of June to Mrs Edney Gerganes of Martin County give my love to all

Yours with Respect  
Wilson A. Norman

NOTES:

<sup>1</sup> Wilson A. Norman's wife, Sarah A., nee Rowe.

<sup>2</sup> Moratock Primitive Baptist Church, near Plymouth.

<sup>3</sup> Maj. W.H. Bartholomew, then commanding the Union forces at Plymouth.

<sup>4</sup> S.P. Woodley. Not positively identified.

<sup>5</sup> Levi Phelps, whom Wilson calls "old", was a 51 year old farmer.

<sup>6</sup> Bill Peney. A Collins slave.

<sup>7</sup> George (W.) Spruill, overseer at Somerset.

<sup>8</sup> C.L. Pettigrew. Owned "Bonarva", adjacent to "Somerset." An older brother of Brig. Gen. James Johnston Pettigrew.

<sup>9</sup> Brig. Gen. J.G. Martin commanding Martin's (later Kirkland's) Brigade.

<sup>10</sup> Benjamin B. Ainsley, Pvt., Co. G., 17th Regiment. Not hanged, Ainsley was exchanged, and would die of a leg wound received near Ft. Fisher.

<sup>11</sup> John W. Norman, Pvt., Co. G. Would be wounded and captured later in the year, and would die, of wounds, in captivity.

<sup>12</sup> James Phelps. A Unionist of Cool Springs District (now Scuppernong Township).

<sup>13</sup> Joab Norman. Father of John W., and an older brother to Wilson A. Joab had drowned in Albemarle Sound in 1850.

<sup>14</sup> Thomas H. Sharp. Major in 1863, later Lt. Col. He led the 17th Regiment during the last months of the war.

<sup>15</sup> Captain Hampton. Not positively identified.

<sup>16</sup> Col. William F. Martin. 17th Regiment.

<sup>17</sup> Captain Thomas Joshua Norman, Co. G. His father, Joseph S., owned "Sharon" in Skimmersville District.

<sup>18</sup> H. Davenport was either Pvt. Hardy W. or Pvt. Henry M., both of Company G. Both were of Cool Springs. Both would be killed in Virginia in 1864.

<sup>19</sup> George P. Collins, son of Josiah III, served first as 2nd Lt. in Co. G. By June 1863, he was a major on the staff of Pettigrew's Brigade.

<sup>20</sup> "Old Man" Moses Davenport, Pvt., Co. G., was about 48 years old. His first wife was "Ruth." He would be discharged in 1864 with "chronic rheumatism."



**OBITUARY**  
**RICHARD M. PEACOCK**  
**A Confederate Soldier**

At the Quarterly meeting at Morratock Primitive Baptist Church February 17, 1912 Elder N.H. Harrison was requested to write the obituary of Mr. Peacock.

"Deacon Richard M. Peacock  
 Brother Peacock was borned December the 1 1840 and died October 7, 1910. when hostilities broke out between the north and South in 1861 he shouldered his gun and went through the Bloody struggle he followed Lee and took part in the great Battle of Gettysburg. After the war was over he Married Miss Margaret Know-Is \_\_\_\_ 1866. She was borned October 23 1844. By this union were borned ten children seven girls and three boys. two daughters and one son Preceeded him to the grave. the other children are grown and married and are doing well. Mrs Peacock and all of the children appeared to be devoited to him as Husband and father. Brother Peacock united with the Church in 1874 He was ordained a Deacon in Morattoc Church and the writer of this notice beleives that he was one of the best deacons Marattoc Church ever had he was bold as a lion and as harmless as a dove....."

(MORRATOCK CHURCH RECORDS (MICROFILM): N.C. ARCHIVES & HISTORY)

## UP COUNTRY

CONFEDERATE STATES OF AMERICA, }  
Charlotte, North Carolina. }

I, ROBERT F. DAVIDSON, Mayor of the Town of Charlotte, do hereby certify that the bearer hereof, *Eli Snell of Washington County* is a Citizen of this ~~State~~ and a true and loyal Citizen of the Southern Confederacy.

In Witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Town seal to be affixed, this 14 day of Oct A. D. 1862.

Countersigned,

*H. M. Dewey* TOWN CLERK.

*Robert Davidson* MAYOR.

Eli Snell (1839-1907), of eastern Skimmersville District, was son of Franklin Snell (1806-1860). His brother Doctrine, Co. H., 17th North Carolina Regiment, had died at Petersburg in August 1862. Pretty obviously, Eli, now age 23, would soon have to join the army, leaving his mother, Edney (1810-1883), alone with the younger children. Arrangement had to be made for the safe keeping of the family's slaves.

When Eli was issued the safe conduct pass, shown above, we think that he had taken some of the Negroes to Mecklenburg County, or was there to make accommodations for them.

Pvt. Eli Snell was captured at Wise's Fork in March, 1865, and imprisoned at Pt. Lookout, Maryland, until June 20. He remained single until 1884, when, at age 45, he married a widow, Maria Clayton Norman (1848-1920), by whom he had one daughter.

EAN



### 32ND REGIMENT'S CASUALTIES AT GETTYSBURG

Writing from Darkesville, W. Va., 19 July, 1863, Col E.C. Brabble reported, "During the three days' fighting the regiment lost in killed and wounded 147 officers and men. Of the 14 reported missing two have since rejoined the regiment and two others have been heard from, and are not in enemy hands." His report is quoted in *North Carolina Regiments, Vol. II*.

## FOLEY BROTHERS OF SKINNERSVILLE

Historians tell us that during the Civil War brother fought against brother and some times fathers and sons fought each other. That would not be the case of the three Foley brothers from the Skinnersville District of Washington County, North Carolina.

John, Thomas, and Staten were the sons of John W. and Frances Wiley Foley, and were raised in a family that shared the same ideas and beliefs about their political convictions.

North Carolina seceded from the Union May 20, 1861 and the following month at the age of 24, Thomas W. Foley enlisted as sergeant Co. G., 1st Regiment N.C. Infantry. At the rather young age of twenty-two, Thomas was the overseer on the farm of William J. Norman, who, according to the census of 1860 owned a substantial amount of property. It seems quite obvious that Thomas was a young leader and he went forward to answer the calling of his home state immediately when it needed him. Records show that Sergeant Thomas Foley made muster roll call several times before he died in the hospital at Richmond, Virginia July 20, 1862. I am not sure of the nature of Thomas's death, but I believe he fought in some of the early engagements with Company G., of the 1st Regiment.

On April 16, 1862 Thomas's brothers John W. and Staten W. enlisted as privates, Co. G., 17th Regiment (2nd Organization) Washington County. They were mustered into service at Camp Mangum by Lt. Col. Lamb. John was 26 years old and Staten was the younger of the three brothers at 21 years old. It appears that the Foley brothers were all serving at the same time for a period of three months prior to Thomas's death in Richmond on July 20, 1862.

Company muster rolls and hospital muster rolls show John, who was the older of the brothers, to be in and out of different hospitals between engagements with the enemy until his death in the hospital at Goldsboro, N.C. on Jan. 20, 1865 with pneumonia.

One wonders by this time how Staten, the younger of the brothers, must have felt after almost three years of defending his beliefs and after the loss of his two brothers. His mother and father both passed away before the beginning of the war.

At the time of the death of brother John, General Sherman had devastated the South and was moving into North Carolina, Lee's army was in trouble in Virginia, and the Federals had the largest fleet of ships ever assembled moving now into Wilmington, N.C.

During an engagement south of Kinston, N.C. at Wise's Forks on the night of March 10, 1865, Pvt. Staten Foley was captured. He was taken to Point Lookout, Maryland and confined to prison there.

General Lee surrendered his army at Appomattox on April 9, 1865 and the President of the Confederacy Jefferson Davis was captured near Irwinville, Georgia in May.

On June 27, 1865 Staten Willis Foley was released from Point Lookout Prison after taking and signing the Oath of Allegiance to the United States of America. I am the great-grandson of Staten and am pleased to own his original certificate of release as a prisoner of war. This certificate is approximately five by seven inches in size with the ends folded one third to the middle to allow it to fit in his shirt or coat pocket the same way it exists to this day.

This certificate in his pocket (possibly his only possession as proof of allegiance) assured him of a safe journey home. Though happy to have survived, one can only imagine what these men thought as they crossed the many miles of scarred land to return to their communities.

As told by my grandmother (daughter of Staten), he arrived in Skimmersville late in the afternoon at the home and farm of George Wiley, relative of his mother Frances Wiley Foley. He slept that night in the barn because of his foul lice-laden condition created while in prison and adverse travel conditions on return home.

On Nov. 4, 1872 Staten married Zilphia Louisa Steeley in the Rehoboth Methodist Church in the Skimmersville Community. From this marriage would be born Virginia, Frances (my grandmother), Thomas (after his brother), Laura, and Matilda.

He applied for a Confederate Soldiers Disability Pension in May 1909 and received it with back pay to 1907 which was when the bill was originally ratified. He was examined by Doctor W.H. Hardison (Conf. vet.) and his application was approved by pension board member and neighbor William R. Chesson (Conf. vet.).

Staten Foley departed this life Sept. 28, 1915. He was buried on his farm in the Skimmersville community with a memorial at his grave which reads: Staten W. Foley Co. G 17 N.C. INF C.S.A.

**BRS**

*(N.C. TROOPS, VOL IX: N.C. A&H)  
(PARISH REGISTER, GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH, 1837-1966)*



#### **OBITUARY; SEPT. 2, 1941**

**Abstracted from "Pamlico Past": 75, 50, and 25 years ago this week  
Washington Daily News, September \_\_, 1991**

"Mrs. Fannie Spruill Biggs died at her residence here Monday morning....after an illness of 10 months.

Mrs. Biggs celebrated her ninetieth birthday on June 1.....She was born at Astoria place in Tyrrell County, the youngest child of Joseph and Caroline Spruill Alexander, a family which had been in the colony since 1697. Her father died before her birth and her mother when she was six years old, after which she came to Williamston to live with her sister and brother-in-law, the late Mr. and Mrs. Dennis Simmons. Mrs. Biggs was educated at Louisburg College.....

.....At age 19 she was married to the late John Dawson Biggs, captain of Company H. Sixty-first North Carolina Infantry,....."

## PROMINENT NURSES

North Carolina Regiments records that three ladies were appointed "head nurses" of newly established Confederate hospitals. Two of these were of the Tyrrell-Washington County area. Unfortunately, NCR allots only four lines to the nurses in its 24 pages on the Medical Corp. We shall, in small measure correct the "slight" by giving brief sketches of these patriotic women.

Mary Beasley, nee Alexander, was widow of John Beasley, who is buried at Grace Episcopal Church, Plymouth. Washington County Census 1860 records Mary as a wealthy woman, with 30 slaves and property valuation of \$33,000. Her son, William F., then 15 years old, would later become Lieutenant Colonel in the Junior Reserves.

Mary, reportedly, endeared herself to her sick and wounded charges, who called her "Mother Beasley." She died, at age 81, "at the home of her daughter" in Toronto, Canada, 10 May 1892. At her death, she was of the Catholic faith.

Mary Blount Pettigrew, daughter of Ebenezer and Ann Blount Shepard Pettigrew, was born in 1826, two years before the birth of her youngest brother, James Johnston. Shortly after the death of her mother in 1830, Mary was sent to live with her maternal Aunt Mary Williams (Mrs. John Herritage) Bryan in New Bern. She was educated, along with her female cousins, at New Bern, Washington, D.C., and St. Mary's School, Raleigh.

Mary served in Confederate hospitals at Petersburg and other locations. On June 3, 1868, she married P. Fielding Browne. The ceremony was at "Bonarva" on Lake Phelps, the home of her eldest brother, Charles. She died, childless, in 1887, leaving most of her estate to nieces and nephews.

EAN

(NORTH CAROLINA REGIMENTS)  
(WASHINGTON COUNTY CENSUS: 1860)  
(ST. DAVID'S PARISH REGISTER)  
(THE PETTIGREW PAPERS: N.C. ARCHIVES & HISTORY)  
(INSCRIPTIONS: CONFEDERATE MONUMENT, COLUMBIA, N.C.)  
(THE ROANOKE BEACON: MAY 20, 1892)



## "A WAR RELIC"

The Roanoke Beacon, May 15, 1903, reprinted the following from The Scotland Neck Commonwealth.

"Some days ago Mr. Peter E. Smith exhibited here a sheet iron taken from the Ram Albemarle which was sunk at Plymouth in 1864.

The sheet of iron was 24 inches long, 7 inches wide, and 1 1/4 inches thick. Mr. Smith will place it in the State Museum at Raleigh."

EAN

## THE CIRCUIT RIDER'S SONS

For most of my life it had been my understanding that the ancestral roots of my paternal grandmother Margaret Susan Norman (1857-1930) had been in South Central Virginia. It wasn't until about 1989 that I learned that the birthplace of her father Alfred Norman (1804-1873) had been on the shores of the Albemarle Sound in Washington County, N.C. This information comes from an article published Nov. 29, 1903 in the *Raleigh News and Observer* that covered an address to the Methodist Conference by a Rev. John N. Cole on the life of Alfred Norman - early Methodist pioneer.

Although Alfred Norman had ten children, one being my grandmother, the two that are of interest for this article are his first born Anthony R.H. Norman born July 4, 1844 and his third, William Capers Norman, born June 28, 1847.

There is little that I know about Anthony except that in the family Bible someone has written in alongside his birth entry, "Was killed facing the Yankee at Gettysburg July 14, 1863." This would be a good area for Ed Norman to research.

William Capers Norman also served in the Confederate army. It seems that he was captured by the "Yankees" and the following quote from a newspaper article written at the time of his death tells how his father Alfred Norman got him out of a prison in New York state.

"Young Norman's father, learning of his capture, prayed incessantly that the boy be released. One morning after he had spent practically an entire night praying, he sat down and wrote a letter to the provost of the prison, which read something like this: 'You have got my boy, William Capers Norman, in your prison. Please let him come home; I need him.'

That letter got through the lines and fell into the hands of the officer to whom it was addressed. He was astonished at its boldness and immediately sent an officer to find William Capers Norman. There were several W.C. Normans in the prison. One of these after the other was questioned and, finally, a young man was located who said his name was William Capers Norman from North Carolina. 'Well you go to Headquarters at once,' he was told, 'You are wanted there right now.' The young man went. In a few days he was home with his father, having been freed and given the necessary passports."

After returning home he entered Trinity College and graduated in 1872. At the time of his death he was serving as a trustee of Trinity College which later became Duke University.

A year after his graduation his father died and William Capers Norman immediately followed his footsteps as a Methodist minister. William Capers became a very prominent minister serving most of his pastorates in the East North Carolina Conference. He died on December 7, 1902 while attending the Conference in Wilmington, N.C.

To give some measure of his prominence as a minister, a newspaper article covering his death stated that as many as a thousand people gathered at the train station when his body returned to

Durham where, for the last three years of his life, he had served Trinity Methodist, the church of Trinity College.

WW

(*THE NEWS AND OBSERVER: DEC. 8, 1902 & NOV. 29, 1903*)  
(*NORMAN FAMILY [OF CASWELL COUNTY] BIBLE*)  
(*“UNIDENTIFIED” NEWSPAPER ARTICLE*)  
(*NORTH CAROLINA TROOPS, VOL. IV: NCA&H*)

(Note: As Cousin Winslow invited me to look into Anthony's case, we can state that he was killed on the "first day" of Gettysburg, July 1, 1863. He had previously been wounded at Gaines' Mill and at Chancellorsville. He was about 21 years old, and fought with Co. D., 13th Regiment. EAN)



### **FRANCIS ATHERTON BOYLE**

Francis Atherton Boyle (1838-1907), a native of Plymouth, North Carolina, had served as 1st Sergeant, Company L, 12th Regiment North Carolina Troops (2nd Regiment North Carolina Volunteers) when he transferred to 32nd Regiment North Carolina Troops in October 1861 with the rank of 1st Sergeant. In January or February he transferred to Company B 2nd Battalion Georgia Infantry. In August 1862 he transferred back to 32nd Regiment. August 23, 1862 he was appointed Quartermaster Sergeant of the Regiment and transferred to Field Staff where he was present or accounted for until he was appointed Adjutant (1st Lieutenant) of the Regiment June 27, 1863.

He was present or accounted for until he was captured at Spotsylvania Court House, Virginia, May 10, 1864 and confined at Point Lookout, Maryland May 14, 1864. June 23, 1864 he was transferred to Fort Delaware, Delaware. On June 16, 1865 he was released at Fort Delaware after taking the Oath of Allegiance.

Francis Boyle, son of John McC Boyle and Maria A. Boyle, returned home and resumed leadership at Grace Episcopal Church, Plymouth, where his father was one of the organizers and served on the first vestry.

In May 1887 while serving as Senior Warden and Lay Reader at Grace Episcopal Church, Francis Boyle moved to Georgia. Upon his return in 1898 he was again elected Senior Warden at Grace Episcopal Church.

Francis Boyle died July 3, 1907 at his home in Jamesville, North Carolina. He is buried in Grace Episcopal Church yard, Plymouth.

LFS

(*N.C. TROOPS, VOL IX: N.C. A&H*)  
(*PARISH REGISTER, GRACE EPISCOPAL CHURCH, 1837-1966*)

## AN EASTER INTERLUDE

In April, 1863, following the failure of the Confederate campaign against New Bern, the 32nd North Carolina marched to attack Washington. Henry A. London, chronicler of the regiment recorded the following incident.

“On the march to Washington, and when only a few miles distant, the Thirty-second Regiment passed a country Episcopal church in which the congregation was then assembled, holding their joyous Easter services (for that day was Easter Sunday) and the devout and faithful chaplain of the regiment (Rev. Joseph W. Murphy) obtained permission to stop long enough to join in singing one hymn, and then marched quietly on. How strange a contrast—here was a congregation quietly worshipping in their parish church, and passing by was a body of armed soldiers marching to battle.”

The 32nd Regiment was commanded by Col. Edmund C. Brabble of Tyrrell County. Rev. Joseph W. Murphy was a former rector of St. David’s Episcopal Church in lower Washington County. The church at which the brief pause in the march occurred was probably Trinity Episcopal at Chocowinity, Beaufort County.

EAN

*(NORTH CAROLINA REGIMENTS, VOL. II)*



## HORSE STORIES

Zeb Vance Norman (1888-1968) remembered the stories of his grandmother Ellen Brabble Norman Ludford (1829-1918). Two of them involved horses.

Ellen lived on a farm at Bay, near Bull’s Bay in northwestern Tyrrell. When the Yankees confiscated her favorite mare, she went to see the Union officer commanding at Plymouth. “Mrs. Norman,” said the officer, “if you can identify your horse, and prove that she was yours, you can take her home.”

Ellen went to the corral where confiscated horses were being kept. She saw the mare, whistled, and called it by name. The horse trotted quickly to her, and she was allowed to take it home.

We suspect that Ellen’s favorite steed was soon taken again—by Union or Confederate troops, or by the detested local Buffaloes. By the time of another Yankee visit, the family had no horses left. Only one old nag was grazing in the pasture, and the officer ordered his men to take it. Ellen pleaded with the officer to spare the old horse, as it belonged to an old preacher who lay, at that moment, seriously ill in her house. Confirming that this was true, the Yankee officer ordered that the nag be returned to pasture. All other horses in the neighborhood were taken.

Vance Norman’s father, Cicero J. (1853-1925) remembered standing with his mother as she begged for the old preacher’s horse.

EAN

**WILLIAM H. HARDISON, SGT. MAJ.  
32nd North Carolina Regiment**

Young "Hardy", as we will call him, was 18 when he enlisted in Company A. on June 1, 1863. The 32nd was then at Fredericksburg, Va. Exactly one month later it would be engaged at Gettysburg. During its three days of fighting there, it would lose 147 men killed and wounded.

Hardy was son of Dr. Hardy and Maria Boyle Hardison. Maria, a native of Ireland, was aunt to Francis (Frank) A. Boyle, also of the 32nd. The Hardisons lived adjacent to St. David's Episcopal Church, about one mile from present-day Creswell.

After serving for a year and a half as Private in Co. A., Hardy was promoted to Sergeant Major of the regiment in January 1865. He is listed among those surrendered with the 32nd at Appomattox.

After the war, Hardy became a physician, following in the footsteps of his father. We don't know where he received his medical education, but know that he served, long and well, the people of lower Washington and western Tyrrell Counties. To my father, born 1880, and his generation, Dr. Hardison was "in their flowing cups freshly remember'd."

Dr. Hardison died March 26, 1925, and is buried in St. David's churchyard. His epitaph echoes that on the nearby gravestone of his father—"The Beloved Physician."

**EAN**

*(N.C. TROOPS, VOL IX: N.C. A&H)  
(NORTH CAROLINA REGIMENTS: VOL. II & V)  
(Gravestones: St. David's)*



**"CONFEDERATE VETERAN DIES"  
From a Williamston, NC Paper  
October ?, 1925**

"Another veteran of the Civil War crossed the bar when Mr. James B. Waters died early Sunday morning at his home on East Main Street. The cause of death was what may be properly classed as God's last call to man—'old age.'

He was 85 years and 11 days old when he died. Born in Washington County, he married Miss Caroline Smith, of Dardens, who died only a few years ago.

He leaves two sons, Will and Clyde Waters, and four daughters, Mrs. Lizzie Woodhouse and Mrs. Mattie Walker, of Florida, Ida Mae Moore, of Willoughby, Va. and Mrs. Eula Lee Roberson of Williamston.

Mr. Waters was an early volunteer in the Confederate Army, serving in Walker's Cavalry through the four years' campaign....."

**JCS**

**EDMUND C. BRABBLE, COL.  
32nd North Carolina Regiment**

Edmund Brabble joined the army from Tyrrell County, and first commanded Co. A., comprised chiefly of men from Tyrrell and Washington Counties. Promoted to Major and a staff position, he became Colonel of the 32nd in March 1862. He led the regiment through many battles, including the three days of Gettysburg. He was killed in the battle of Spottsylvania Court House, Va. on May 10, 1864.

The parents of the Colonel are thought to have come to Tyrrell from Currituck County. Orphaned by early 1851, Edmund came under the guardianship of Joseph R. Norman, husband of Edmund's sister, Ellen. Court records show that, in 1854, the guardian was allowed "300.00 out of the funds belonging to E.C. Brabble for the purpose of defraying his expenses at college for the year 1854."

We don't know the total amount of Edmund's own funds (probably meager) that went toward paying his way through Dartmouth College. Brabble family tradition says that Josiah Collins of "Somerset" was intrigued by Edmund's bright promise, and helped him through school.

At Census 1860, Edmund (age 25) is recorded as "Teacher" in the Collins household. At October Term of that year, he appeared at the Tyrrell Court and "exhibited his licence to practice law, whereupon he was elected solicitor for a term of four years."

Following his death on the field of Spottsylvania, Edmund's estate was administered by his former guardian. According to the St. David's Church records, he (an Episcopalian) was buried in that churchyard. The body was obviously removed, for his modest marker has long stood in the cemetery at Albemarle Church, formerly Methodist Protestant (now Church of Christ), the church of his Norman in-laws.

**RDW  
EAN**

*(NORTH CAROLINA REGIMENTS)  
(ST. DAVID'S REGISTER)  
(TYRRELL COUNTY COURT MINUTES)  
(Brabble Family Tradition)*



**LINK OF THE CHAIN**

Zeb Vance Norman (1888-1968), late attorney of Plymouth, told of rowing up the Roanoke to Tallow Island with an older brother who was then a student at Trinity College. The brother chopped from a huge tree an ingrown link of a great chain put there by the Yankees during the war to prevent the ironclad Albemarle from passing down-river. The brother, Vance recalled, took the link to Trinity where it was put on display in the college library. This was about the early 1890's.

**EAN**

## **THE CANNON AND THE CROSS** **Confederate Chaplains from Washington County**

Of the four chaplains known to have entered the service from Washington County, only one was born here. All were Episcopalian. All survived the war. They were:

### **Thomas B. Haughton** **50th N.C. Regiment**

Haughton was probably born in Chowan, but by 1850 the family was living in Tyrrell. The household was headed by Thomas's widowed mother, Margaret. The 1860 Census found them in Plymouth. Thomas was recorded as a 25 year old school teacher.

He was commissioned "Chaplain" in January 1862, and served with the 50th throughout the war. He became Rector of Grace Church, Plymouth, soon after the war. There he recorded in the church Register several wartime burials at which he officiated at Wilmington, Tarboro, and other places. These dead soldiers had no known connections to Grace Church. Interestingly, one of the burials was of Benjamin B. Ainsley, of the 17th Regiment, who was interred in Oakwood Cemetery, Wilmington. Another was of a soldier executed at Tarboro.

After leaving Grace, he preached at the Church of the Advent, Williamston, in which town he died in 1894.

### **Joseph W. Murphy, D.D.** **32nd N.C. Regiment**

Murphy was a native of Ireland. In 1860, he was 31 years old, with a wife (born in N.C.) and two children. He was Rector of St. David's Church, adjacent to Belgrade Plantation. Dr. Hardy Hardison, whose son William Hardy would serve in the 32nd, was a near neighbor.

At Gettysburg, Rev. Murphy chose to remain behind to minister to the regiment's seriously wounded who could not be moved back across the Potomac. Confined for two months at Forts Norfolk and McHenry, he was exchanged and resigned from the service. He lived first at Henderson, but was residing in Washington, D.C. in 1901.

### **George Patterson, D.D.** **3rd N.C. Regiment**

Patterson was a native of Massachusetts. The Census of 1860 records him as "age 34, Episcopal Clergyman" in the Josiah Collins household at "Somerset," where he served the Collins family and their 328 slaves.

When the Collinses "refugeed" to Hillsborough early in the war, Patterson remained, for a while, at Somerset to try to protect the property.

He was commissioned on 30 December, 1862. After the war, he preached in Wilmington, N.C.; later in Memphis, Tenn. He died about 1901.

**Girard W. Phelps  
17th N.C. Regiment**

Phelps, son of Jeremiah and Deborah Fortune Phelps, was born and raised in the Scuppernong section of Washington County. As a member of St. David's, he undoubtedly was well acquainted with the Reverends Murphy and Patterson.

Enlisting as a private in Co. G., 17th Regiment, by June 1863 he was superintendent of a receiving hospital near Kinston. He was ordained in December of that year, and in March '64 was appointed chaplain of the regiment. Captured about a year later, he was paroled in June 1865.

After the war, Reverend Phelps served churches in Gatesville, Lake Landing, Wilson, Shelby, Marion, Littleton, and Scotland Neck, N.C., and Suffolk, Hicksford, and Victoria, Va. He died in Victoria in 1918.

**EAN**

(NORTH CAROLINA REGIMENTS)  
(THE COLLINS PAPERS: NC A&H)  
(GRACE CHURCH REGISTER)  
(ST. DAVID'S REGISTER)

(CENSUSES OF 1850 & 1860)  
(THE ARCHIVES OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH: AUSTIN, TX)  
(THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN NORTH CAROLINA)  
(RESEARCH BY THOMAS PHELPS: MINNETONKA, MINN.)



**PLEADING FOR A PRAYER BOOK**  
**Girard W. Phelps to Josiah Collins III**

This letter "fragment" has survived among the *Collins Papers*. Phelps is asking Collins for the gift of a prayer book. Readers of our April 1994 Journal will recall the letter, dated June 14, 1863, in which Phelps thanks Mr. Collins for the book, so we may assume that the "fragment" quoted below was written some weeks before the June date. The fragment was written from Ft. Branch on the Roanoke River.

.....that there is no one I can call upon, \_\_\_\_ to procure me one so well as the friend who has been many times more to me than a father.

The yankees continue to raid about the county of W. stealing as usual. Mr. Henderson Phelps died suddenly a few days ago of dipthea. Has been carried down into Washington County for burial.

Our Fort is nearly finished on the Rke river The guns are mounted & the fort maned, so if the "yanks" were to come they would not fare so well.

Please give my kindest remembrances to Mrs Collins Grant my request - & oblige your most--

Respectfully & truly  
Girard W. Phelps  
Company G. 17. Regt

**EAN**

## TYRRELL'S WARTIME COURT

By early 1861 the Tyrrell County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, as the governing body of the County, found itself deeply involved in preparation for a war not yet declared, but soon to fall heavily upon the county. During the conflict, the Court attempted to perform its normal functions while struggling to cope with the exigencies of war. On several occasions during the years 1862-1865, the Court was unable to meet at all.

The below-quoted extracts from the Minutes were selected for their "war interest," and do not reflect the many cases of "normal" business handled by the Court during the war years.

### From the Minutes

#### April Term 1861

Ordered that C.L. Pettigrew, B. Spruill, B.A. Spruill and Sam Alexander be appointed a Military Committee to disperse such funds as may be required for the Volunteer force belonging to the County of Tyrrell.

#### May Term 1861

Election ordered to elect delegates to the Convention at Raleigh to be on 20 May, 1861.  
Election to be held 13 May, 1861.

Further ordered that all persons subject to military duty living at Croatan & Stumpy Point be organized into a Home Guard, and that they be subject to regular military drill.

Ordered that the said Committee be empowered to issue \$100 bonds signed by all the committee to the amount of 5 thousand dollars.

Ordered that E.C. Brabble be directed to apply to the Governor of North Carolina for the arms belonging to the County of Tyrrell.

Ordered that S.M. Alexander, John McClees, B.A. Spruill, R.B. Knight, Benjamin Spruill, Henry Holmes & Eph Leigh be appointed to look after the families of the Volunteers in their several neighborhoods, and the expenses resulting therefrom to be paid by the Military Committee.

Ordered that the Volunteers from this county be exempt from paying any portion of the Military Tax raised for the support of the Volunteers.

#### October Term 1861

Ordered that Benjamin Brickhouse be allowed \$4.75 for furnishing 19 meals for the guard on the Sound.

Ordered that the Colonel of this Tyrrell County Militia be allowed to call out the militia of said county, and in case they refuse to obey his orders, to send an armed guard and bring them out to do duty. And in case they refuse to do military duty, to confine them in the common jail of the county at the county's expense.

#### April Term 1863

John McClees appointed Commissioner for Tyrrell County to receive and dispose of all funds that may be appropriated to the wives and families of indigent soldiers in the County of Tyrrell in accord with "An Act for the Relief of Wives & Families of Soldiers in the Army," ratified in the General Assembly on 10 February 1861.

### July Term 1864

Ordered that Joseph R. Norman be commissioned to secure cotton cards from \_\_\_\_\_ Department, Raleigh.

Ordered that Joseph R. Norman be & is hereby appointed Administrator upon the Estate of Col. Edmund C. Brabble, deced., a citizen of this county, killed in May 1864, in the battle of Spottsylvania Court House, Va.-----upon his entering into a bond of Five Thousand Dollars, with B.F. Norman & B.W. Foster as securities thereto.....

### October Term 1864

Ordered that Enoch Hassell be appointed Keeper of the Ferry at Columbia. Foot passenger 50¢, Man & Horse \$1.50, Horse & buggy \$1.50.

Ordered that the salt to be furnished by the State for this county be first distributed to the families of the Volunteers..., needing salt, at the rate of 20 lbs. of salt for each member of the family. After they are supplied, the remainder to be divided among the destitute widows of the county.

It is determined that it is not advisable to collect the State and County Tax owing to the peculiar situation of the County in regard to the present difficult times.

Note: The appointment of a "ferry keeper at Columbia" at October Term 1864 lends credibility to the tradition that the bridge was destroyed during the war. A float bridge was authorized in 1807, and was apparently built soon thereafter. The bridge existing when the war began was, likely, a fixed span with draw.

EAN



In his IRONCLADS AND COLUMBIADS, William R. Trotter quotes from DOLLARD: Recollections of the Civil War. The writer of the following was a soldier from Massachusetts.

"The roads were so bad that even after forty-four years (the memory of them) can give me about as good a rhetorical start in the way of profanity as any inspiration at my command. Even the mud seemed different -- more glutinous, more impassable -- than New England mud. North Carolina soil...in connection with a good vigorous rain, is a combination hard to beat in opposition to the march of large bodies of troops; at its best it seemed as though when one got his foot well stuck in the mud and attempted to get it out it was a question whether the mud or the ankle would give way."

EAN



"Fight the Yankees and fuss with the Confederates."

Zeb B. Vance, North Carolina's Civil War governor.

**“LORENA”**  
**Saddest Song of the South?**

The years creep slowly by, Lorena;  
The snow is on the grass again;  
The Sun's low down the sky, Lorena;  
The frost gleams where the flowers have been.  
But the heart throbs on as warmly now  
As when the summer days were nigh;  
Oh! the sun can never dip so low  
Adown affection's cloudless sky.

As the war dragged on, conditions worsened at home. Soldiers were bombarded, we are told, by letters from wives telling of hungry children, family illnesses, and depredations by U.S. troops and their Unionist henchmen. All this produced in many soldiers a condition known as “fathers gone mad.” Such men were more prone to desert the military than were most of their comrades.

Some officials conceived the notion that the rather lugubrious “Lorena” tended to influence anxious, worried soldiers to desert, and proposed that the singing of it by the troops be prohibited. Fortunately, wiser heads prevailed, and from the campfires, and on the march to the battlefields, Southern voices continued to sing

A hundred months have passed, Lorena,  
Since last I held that hand in mine,  
And felt the pulse beat fast, Lorena,  
Though mine beat faster far than thine.  
A hundred months—‘twas flowery May,  
When up the hilly slope we climbed,  
To watch the dying of the day  
And hear the distant church bells chime.

EAN

(NORTH CAROLINA REGIMENTS)  
(ZEB VANCE: CHAMPION OF PERSONAL FREEDOM. GLENN TUCKER)



“The great majority of my brigade would shoot a deserter as quick as they would a snake.”

Brig. Gen. James Johnston Pettigrew  
1863

**NEWSOME HENRY HARRISON, PVT.  
Co. H., 10th North Carolina Regiment**

Newsome Harrison enlisted in Washington County on June 1, 1864, and served throughout the rest of the war.

After the war, he quickly became deeply involved in the Morattock Primitive Baptist Church. He and Morattock would have a long and turbulent relationship.

First mentioned as "Brother Harrison" in the church records of 1865, he was recorded as "Elder" 10 years later. He was then about 30 years old. In 1882, he was chosen "Pastor."

Shortly after achieving the pulpit, Pastor Harrison apparently ran afoul of church politics. In 1883 his "case" was considered and he was relegated to the status of "Brother," but "forgiven." The records give no details.

By early 1885, he was again elevated to "Elder," and became Pastor again later that year. In 1886, his request to "withdraw as pastor" was granted.

In 1925 he is again plainly recorded as "Pastor," but had likely had that office for quite some time. The records are sometime vague.

The record for November 16, 1929, states that "Elder N.H. Harrison (is) excluded from Marattock." ("Excluded" among the Primitive Baptists was "excommunicated.") At age 84, he had committed the abomination of meeting with, and preaching to, persons "excluded" from the Smithwick Creek congregation. He is never again mentioned in the Records of Morattock Church.

By now (may we imagine?) Pvt. Harrison, late of the 10th N.C. Regiment, might cast up his eyes unto the hills and cry "Oh Lord! I want to go back to the army."

**EAN**

*(RECORDS OF MORATTOCK CHURCH: NCA&H)  
(RECORDS: COURTESY MRS. GERALDINE WATERS)*



"If you can survive church politics, you can do anything."

Former Governor Robert Scott: "A Conversation With Five Governors"  
UNC TV. 1994



**HARD FEELINGS DIE HARD**

"They're nothing but old Buffaloes."

Blanche Latham Darden (1893-1960) commenting (c. 1950) on a Washington County family whose ancestors had been Unionists.

## CONDITIONS UP COUNTRY

### Eli Spruill to Eli Snell

Two letters, both undated, from Spruill to Snell have survived. The first of the letters seems to have been written in late 1863; the other in late December 1864. Portions of the first are excerpted below.

Eli Spruill (1818-1887) had served as Clerk of the Tyrrell Court before the war. In 1862-1864 he represented Tyrrell in the General Assembly. He was likely living in Raleigh when the "first" letter was written.

Spruill was overseeing slaves taken from Washington and Tyrrell Counties to the Piedmont in order to keep them from being freed by the Union forces. We don't know if he had in his charge slaves other than his own and Snell's.

Eli and his wife, Harriet (1828-1902), are buried in Oakwood Cemetery, Columbia.

#### The Letter

Dear Eli

I wrote you not to send me any money—but I have concluded to moove further up and may need all the money I have—and it is not likely that I shall collect your Negro hire this year in time and cloth and shoes are so high that it will cost considerable—cloth \$3 a yard and shoes \$30 a pair. Meat is \$1.85 per lb & you will therefore send me \$600.....Harriet has been sick for 8 weeks and I have not been to Charlotte. Your Negroes are needing clothes—I will go up as soon as I can and clothe and shoe them and try to make further arrangements for them for next year. Your Negroes down here are all well—I shall moove them further up the country next year.—The boys like me very much. They came to see me a few weeks ago and say they will follow me any where and stay with me or where I put them un till the war ends if it is seven years. I hope your mothers family are all well and that you are not so much harrassed as you have been—have patience we will get through after a while.—I have sent after my Rockaway and harness if I can get them through—send my monkey wrench with her and send the \$600——I shall buy a place I think to stay up the country until the war ends—no one can pass through the country now without a pass from the provost marshall——you can't come out without being arrested——our love to you and all the family we think of you oft—times is getting difficult here every body is pressed in the service for state defence up to 50 years old

Truly  
Eli Spruill

**JOHN BATEMAN**  
**Co. L., 1st N.C. (Union) Volunteers**

John Bateman enlisted in Company L., a cavalry company in a regiment composed mainly of infantry, at Plymouth in March 1863. Records state that he was 5' 9 1/2" tall, and had light complexion, "light" eyes and auburn hair.

John swears in his application for pension that he was ruptured when his horse fell during "a charge against the enemy" in July 1864. Andrew Davenport, one of those supporting John's application, was not the most grammatical of the several deponents, but, we suspect, "told it like it was." His deposition follows:

“Skinnerville Washington County N C Aug 18 1879  
the Commissioners of pensions Esq  
Dear sirs.....i was with Mr John Bateman whend he recived the  
wownd it was downe close kenansville N.C. in July the 4th on  
Sownday being in the year of 1864 I seed the horse whend he fell with  
him & he was hirt so he had to go to the anvelance wagon & I have  
seen the rupture since that he recived frome the fall of the horse the  
powmiel of the Saddel is what ruptured him & he was examied by the  
Dr & considerd not able to performe no mounted duty & fouthier more  
the tumors he has got that way by riding on the Sadiel he was sed to be  
a firme & solied man before he went in the army I took him to be so  
myself what I State here is the truth to the best of my knowlege  
Andrew Davenport

Information from John Bateman to the Bureau of Pensions, in 1898, reveals that he married Nancy Furlough on August 28, 1861, and that they had children Johnson B., Enoch(?), Amelia, B.F., Martha A., Thomas N. and Cottie H.

Claims for pension were often long, drawn-out proceedings. John seems to have received his, of \$15.00/month, effective April 1899. He received that monthly payment until his death on or about May 17, 1911.

VII

(PENSION RECORDS: NATIONAL ARCHIVES)



## “COME TO GIT YA”

Julia Spencer Burrus (1855-1947), raised on "Lazy Lane" near what became the village of Engelhard, Hyde County, remembered how the Yankee cavalrymen, at dusk, would drape a bedsheet on a saber point and ride through the fields of tall Hyde County corn. Horse and rider would be concealed by the corn above which the sheet floated like a specter. "Look yonder," the soldiers would exclaim to the Negroes, "That's your dead old Master, and he's come to git ya."

EAN

**HENRY P. AMBROSE, PVT.  
Co. L., 1st N.C. (Union) Volunteers**

Henry's records reveal that he enlisted at Plymouth on 21 June, 1862. He stood 5'7", with blue eyes, light complexion, and brown hair. His occupation was farmer.

In his application for pension, he states that "on or about the 15th day of February, 1864 he was taken with typhoid pneumonia, and had a severe case of the same, which has left both lungs in a very weak condition." He was "treated at hospital at Washington, N.C. and Morehead City in May 1864."

Henry states that he was first married to Rhoda Anne Alexander in 1863 (Washington County marriage records give the date as 1866). Rhoda died "about 1883." His second wife was Sallie Ambrose, nee Godwin. Henry, in 1915, could not recall the date of this marriage.

After the war, Henry lived in Perquimans County, N.C., and Norfolk County, VA.

Henry's effort toward pension began in 1890, but appears to have been unsuccessful until 1913 when he was awarded \$25.00 per month. In September 1916 his son, J.G. Ambrose advised the Commissioner of Pensions that "my father, Henry P. Ambrose, was a pensioner at the time of his death August 23, 1916, an inmate of the National Soldiers Home, Hampton VA.....he had been an inmate there for about two years." The son's letter is on the letterhead of AMBROSE CO., INC., Dealers in Food and Fuel, South Norfolk, VA.

Henry P. Ambrose was son of Elsberry Ambrose, a leading Unionist of Cool Spring District (now Scuppernong Township).

EAN

*(PENSION RECORDS: NATIONAL ARCHIVES)  
(WASHINGTON COUNTY CENSUS 1860)  
(WAR OF ANOTHER KIND: WAYNE DURRILL)*



**HAMILTON DAVENPORT  
Co. C., 1st N.C. (Union) Volunteers**

Hamilton Davenport was my great great grandfather. He joined the Union army in 1862, when he was about 21 years old. After the war, he married Senie Armstrong.

My Comstock ancestors were in the Confederate army.

RC

**WILLIAM HETTRICK, SGT.  
Co. H., 78 Illinois Regiment**

We have a handwritten statement by our great great uncle, probably made as part of an application for pension:

“My ankle was injured in forepart of March 1865 while in route of Gen. Shermans Army from Savanna Ga. to Goldsboro, N.C. by wheel of army waggon passing over it. No affliction set forth in my claim has been caused by viciouness or intemperance or any other vice, I never had any affray with any Soldier or other person, or drunk while in service. Nor can any person say that I have been intemperate since I always tried to take as good care of myself as possible.”

We can't vouch for Uncle William's sobriety, but know that he liked what he saw in North Carolina. He returned after the war and joined our great grandfather, John Penrose Hettrick (also a Union veteran), in his successful fishing enterprise using the revolutionary “pound” net.

William married Alice Louise White, of Washington County, in 1881. After William's death in 1895, Alice remarried. While living in Norfolk in 1910 she received a check for \$15.95 from the government. This amount, she was advised, was due William Hettrick for service from May 29-June 20, 1865. So now, 45 years after discharge and 15 years after his death, Sgt. William Hettrick, late of Sherman's Army, was paid in full.

**JO'N  
LS**



**SAMUEL J. DAVENPORT  
North Carolina Union Volunteers**

Samuel Davenport, my great grandfather, was born in 1821 in Skimmersville District. We don't know exactly when he joined the North Carolina Union Volunteers, or to which regiment he belonged. It was almost certainly the 1st or 2nd Regiment. And we don't know why he chose allegiance to the Union.

Samuel was captured and confined in Salisbury Prison, where he died. The family story goes that he “grieved himself to death.”

I visited the site of Salisbury Prison not long ago. The prison was destroyed at the end of the war. A fine National Cemetery is located there now. The brochure available there gives much more information than we have room for here.

Briefly, when the Union stopped the exchange of prisoners, the Salisbury population quickly mushroomed. Facilities, initially adequate, became quickly deadly, with the number of prisoners jumping from 5000 to 10,000 in a month and a half. Shortages of food, fuel, clothing, medicine, etc. caused terrible hardships. Mass graves accommodated the bodies of 11,700 Union troops. These dead are unidentified. There are no grave markers.

My ancestor is in one of those graves.

**ABD**

## FOES AND KINSMEN THE INDIANA CONNECTION

About 1830, John A. Norman (1809-1849) of the Scuppernong area of Washington County migrated to Dubois County, Indiana. There he joined his Alexander uncles, Ashbury and Isaac, who had migrated from Tyrrell County about 1811 and 1815, respectively.

In Indiana, John A. married Brittan Dillin, his Uncle Isaac's step-daughter, born in Tyrrell in 1806. John and Brittan raised two sons, Benjamin F. and John P., who would fight for the Union.

These two young men were nephews to Wilson A. Norman and first cousins to Andrew and John W. Norman of Co. G., 17th Regiment (N.C.), C.S.A. Although all of these kinsmen saw combat, their regiments never met on the field of battle.

### **BENJAMIN F. NORMAN, PVT. Co. N., 10th Regiment, Indiana Cavalry**

Benjamin enlisted in January 1864 at age 18. He was 5'11" tall, and had grey eyes, light complexion and light hair.

His record states that "he died in USA General Hospital at Baton Rouge, La. with pneumonia Apr. 27/65. He was in the engagements at Decatur, Ala. Oct 26/64, Paint Rock Dec 12/64, Indian Creek Dec 23/64 & always fought with bravery."

### **JOHN P. NORMAN, 1st SGT. Co. E., 58th Regiment, Indiana Infantry**

John P. enlisted in October 1861 at age 22. He was 6'3" tall, and like his brother, had grey eyes and light hair and complexion.

John was rabidly anti-Southern and kept up a bitter verbal combat, through letters to his hometown paper, the Jasper Courier, with Indiana soldiers of more moderate views.

John was wounded severely twice--at Stone River (Murfreesboro, Tenn.) and at Chickamauga. He was discharged in November 1864 at the expiration of his three-year enlistment.

After his military service, John prospered as a farmer and the owner of a successful flour mill.

In 1892, at the urging of his comrades at the annual reunion of the veterans of the 58th Regiment, John wrote a lengthy account of his celebrated reconnaissance (accompanied by one volunteer) behind the Confederate lines at Stone River on the night of December 30, 1862.

The old veteran died on February 10, 1897.

**EAN**

*(MILITARY RECORDS: NATIONAL ARCHIVES)  
(HISTORY OF DUBOIS COUNTY: GOODSPEED BROTHER, 1885)  
(THE JASPER (INDIANA) COURIER)*

**(The kind assistance of Gladys LaFollette, g-granddaughter of John P.)**

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